

Reading Methods: SQ3R

Do you have problems concentrating on your reading? Do you forget what you read the minute you finish? Following the five steps of SQ3R can help you to process and remember what you read!

► S = Survey

Survey the piece of writing to establish its purpose (what is it trying to get across to the reader?) and to get the main ideas. Look at

- Titles
- Pictures
- Introduction and conclusion
- Bold or italicized print
- Questions
- First and last sentences in paragraphs
- Footnotes

► Q = Question

As you are surveying the piece, a good way to decide what you will be reading for when you do read is to question as you survey. Writing down questions keeps you alert and focused on your work.

- Divide a sheet of paper in half lengthwise.
- On the left half, write questions as you are surveying the piece. For example:
 - The **title** may be "Skydiving in Five Easy Lessons". The question that you might write down is "What are the five lessons that a person must go through to learn how to skydive?"
 - An **introductory sentence** states that "a parachute is essential in learning to skydive." The question you would write down might be "Why is having a parachute really important when you're learning how to skydive?"
 - A **heading for a section** could state "How to Fall"; the question might be "Why is it important to know how to fall?" or "What are the specific ways that a person must fall when learning how to skydive?"
- In addition to forming your own questions, look at any questions that may be posed by the author in sidebars or at the end of a section.
- It is important that you write these questions in your own words, not simply the words of the author. This will help you process the information more deeply (i.e., you will be able to recall it with more ease).

► R1 = Read

As you read, read to answer your questions, both in your mind and in writing on the right side of your "Question and Answer" paper. Since you have already selected the material (through your questions) that you know is important, you should be able to read selectively and separate out the "fluff" that is not as important.

Answer the question in your own words, not in the words of the author. This will enable you to understand and comprehend more fully because you will, in essence, be forcing yourself to "translate" the "gobbledygook" that you frequently encounter in writing, especially in textbooks.

► R2 = Recite

After you have read and answered all of your questions, it is helpful to recite the questions and your answers. To do this, you should:

- Recite each question out loud (one at a time).
- Answer each question verbally according to the answer you have written down on the right side of the page.

► R3 = Review

- Using your notes, mentally go over the material within 24 hours of covering it.
- Review again after one week.
- Review approximately once a month until your exam.